

Old French

Old French (*franceis*, *françois*, *romanz*; Modern French: *ancien français*) was the language spoken in Northern France from the 8th century to the 14th century. In the 14th century, these dialects came to be collectively known as the *langue d'oïl*, contrasting with the *langue d'oc* or Occitan language in the south of France. The mid-14th century is taken as the transitional period to Middle French, the language of the French Renaissance, specifically based on the dialect of the Île-de-France region.

The region where Old French was spoken natively roughly extended to the northern half of the Kingdom of France and its vassals (including parts of the Angevin Empire, which during the 12th century remained under Anglo-Norman rule), and the duchies of Upper and Lower Lorraine to the east (corresponding to modern north-eastern France and Belgian Wallonia), but the influence of Old French was much wider, as it was carried to England and the Crusader states as the language of a feudal elite and commerce.^[2]

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Old French	
<i>Franceis, François, Romanz</i>	
Pronunciation	[frãntsəɪs] , [frãntswe] , [romãnts]
Region	northern France, parts of Belgium (Wallonia), Scotland, England, Ireland, Principality of Antioch, Kingdom of Cyprus
Era	evolved into Middle French by the 14th century
Language family	<div>Indo-European<ul style="list-style-type: none">Italic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Romance<ul style="list-style-type: none">Western<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gallo-Romance<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gallo-Rhaetian<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oil<ul style="list-style-type: none">Francien<ul style="list-style-type: none">Old French</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-2	fro (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=147)
ISO 639-3	fro
Glottolog	oldf1239 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/oldf1239) ^[1]

Areal and dialectal divisions

The areal of Old French in contemporary terms corresponded to the northern parts of the Kingdom of France (including Anjou and Normandy, which in the 12th century were ruled by the Plantagenet kings of England), Upper Burgundy and the duchy of Lorraine. The Norman dialect was also spread to England and Ireland, and during the crusades, Old French was also spoken in the Kingdom of Sicily, and in the Principality of Antioch and the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Levant.

As part of the emerging Gallo-Romance dialect continuum, the *langues d'oïl* were contrasted with the *langue d'oc* (the emerging Occitano-Romance group, at the time also called Provençal), adjacent to the Old French area in the south-west, and with the Gallo-Italic group to the south-east. The Franco-Provençal group developed in Upper Burgundy, sharing features with both French and Provençal; it may have begun to diverge from the *langue d'oïl* as early as the 9th century and is attested as a distinct Gallo-Romance variety by the 12th century.

Dialects or variants of Old French include:

- Burgundian in Burgundy, then an independent duchy whose capital was at Dijon;
- Picard of Picardy, whose principal cities were Calais and Lille. It was said that the Picard language began at the east door of Notre-Dame de Paris, so far-reaching was its influence;
- Old Norman, in Normandy, whose principal cities were Caen and Rouen. The Norman conquest of England brought many Norman-speaking aristocrats into the British Isles. Most of the older Norman (sometimes called "French") words in English reflects its influence, which became a conduit for the introduction into the Anglo-Norman realm, as did Anglo-Norman control of Anjou and Gascony and other continental possessions. Anglo-Norman was a language that reflected a shared culture on both sides of the English Channel.^[3] Ultimately, the language declined and fell, becoming Law French, a jargon spoken by lawyers that were used in English law until the reign of Charles II of England; however, the Norman language, still survives in Normandy and the Channel Islands, as a regional language;
- Wallon, around Namur, now in Wallonia, Belgium;
- Gallo of the Duchy of Brittany;
- Lorrain of the Duchy of Lorraine.

Some modern languages are derived from Old French dialects other than Classical French, which is based on the Île-de-France dialect. They include Angevin, Berrichon, Bourguignon-Morvandiau, Champenois, Franc-Comtois, Gallo, Lorrain, Norman, Picard, Poitevin, Saintongeais and Walloon.

History

Evolution from Vulgar Latin

Beginning with Plautus' time (254–184 B.C.), one can see phonological changes between Classical Latin and what is called Vulgar Latin, the common spoken language of the Western Roman Empire. Vulgar Latin differed from Classical Latin in phonology and morphology as well as exhibiting lexical differences; however, they were mutually intelligible until the 7th century when Classical Latin 'died' as a daily spoken language, and had to be learned as a second language (though it was long thought of as the formal version of the spoken language).^[4] Vulgar Latin was the ancestor of the Romance languages, including Old French.^{[5][6][7][8][9]}

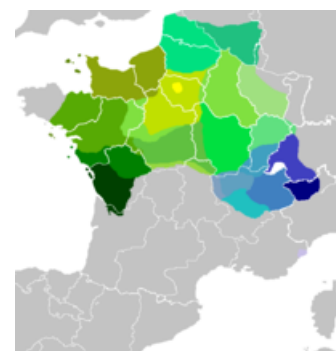
Non-Latin influences

Gaulish

Some Gaulish words influenced Vulgar Latin and, through this, other Romance languages. For example, classical Latin *equus* was uniformly replaced in Vulgar Latin by *caballus* 'nag, work horse', derived from Gaulish *caballos* (cf. Welsh *ceffyl*, Breton *kefel*),^[10] giving Modern French *cheval*, Occitan *caval* (*chaval*), Catalan *cavall*, Spanish *caballo*, Portuguese *cavalo*, Italian *cavallo*, Romanian *cal*, and, by extension, English *cavalry*. An estimated 200 words of Gaulish etymology survive in modern French, for example *chêne* 'oak tree' and *charrue* 'plough'.^[11]



Map of France in 1180, at the height of the feudal system. The possessions of the French king are in light blue, vassals to the French king in green, Angevin possessions in red. Shown in white is the Holy Roman Empire to the east, the western fringes of which, including Upper Burgundy and Lorraine, were also part of the Old French areal.



Distribution of the modern *langue d'oïl* (shades of green) and of Franco-Provençal dialects (shades of blue)

Within historical phonology and studies of language contact, various phonological changes have been posited as caused by a Gaulish substrate, although there is some debate. One of these is considered certain, because this fact is clearly attested in the Gaulish-language epigraphy on the pottery found at la Graufesenque (A.D. 1st century). There, the Greek word *paropsid-es* (written in Latin) appears as *paraxsid-i*.^[12] The consonant clusters /ps/ and /pt/ shifted to /xs/ and /xt/, e.g. Latin *capsa* > **kaxsa* > *caisse* (≠ Italian *cassa*) or *captivus* > **kaxtivus* > OF *chaitif*^[13] (mod. *chétif*; cf. Irish *cacht* 'servant'; ≠ Italian *cattiv-ità*, Portuguese *cativo*, Spanish *cautivo*). This phonetic evolution is parallel to the shift of the Latin cluster /kt/ in Old French (Latin *factum* > *fait*, ≠ Italian *fatto*, Portuguese *feito*, Spanish *hecho*; or *lactem** > *lait*, ≠ Italian *latte*, Portuguese *leite*, Spanish *leche*).

The Celtic Gaulish language is thought to have survived into the 6th century in France, despite considerable cultural Romanization.^[14] Coexisting with Latin, Gaulish helped shape the Vulgar Latin dialects that developed into French, with effects including loanwords and calques (including *oui*,^[15] the word for "yes"),^{[16][15]} sound changes shaped by Gaulish influence,^{[17][18]} and influences in conjugation and word order.^{[16][15][19]} Recent computational studies suggest that early gender shifts may have been motivated by the gender of the corresponding word in Gaulish.^[20]

Frankish

The pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax of the Vulgar Latin spoken in Roman Gaul in Late Antiquity was modified by the Old Frankish language, spoken by the Franks who settled in Gaul from the 5th century and conquered the entire Old French-speaking area by the 530s. The name *français* itself is derived from the name the Franks.

The Old Frankish language had a definitive influence on the development of Old French, which partly explains why the earliest attested Old French documents are older than the earliest attestations in other Romance languages (e.g. Strasbourg Oaths, Sequence of Saint Eulalia).^[21] It is the result of an earlier gap created between Classical Latin and its evolved forms, which slowly reduced and eventually severed the intercomprehensibility between the two. The Old Low Franconian influence is also believed to be responsible for the differences between the *langue d'oïl* and the *langue d'oc* (Occitan), being that various parts of Northern France remained bilingual between Latin and Germanic for some time,^[22] and these areas correspond precisely to where the first documents in Old French were written.

This Germanic language shaped the popular Latin spoken here and gave it a very distinctive identity compared to the other future Romance languages. The very first noticeable influence is the substitution of the Latin melodic accent by a Germanic stress^[23] and its result was diphthongization, differentiation between long and short vowels, the fall of the unaccented syllable and of the final vowels:

- Latin *decimus*, -a 'tenth' > OF *disme* > F *dîme* 'tithe' (> E *dime*; Italian *decimo*, Spanish *diezmo*)
- VL *dignitate* > OF *deintié* (> E *dainty*; Italian *dignità*, Romanian *demnitate*)
- VL *catena* > OF *chaeine* (> E *chain*; Italian *catena*, Cast./Occitan *cadena*, Portuguese *cadeia*)

Additionally, two phonemes that had long since died out in Vulgar Latin were reintroduced: [h] and [w] (> OF *g(u)-*, ONF *w-* cf. Picard w-):

- VL *altu* > OF *halt* 'high' (influenced by OLF **hōh* ; ≠ Italian, Portuguese *alto*, Catalan *alt*, Old Occitan *aut*)
- L *vespa* > F *guêpe*, Picard *wèpe*, Wallon *wèsse*, all 'wasp' (influenced by OLF **wapsa*; ≠ Occitan *vèspa*, Italian *vespa*, Spanish *avispa*)
- L *viscus* > F *gui* 'mistletoe' (influenced by OLF **wīhsila* 'morello' with analogous fruits, when they are not ripe; ≠ Occitan *vesc*, Italian *vischio*)
- LL *vulpiculu* 'fox kit' (from L *vulpes* 'fox') > OF *golpilz*, Picard *woupil* 'fox' (influenced by OLF **wulf* 'wolf'; ≠ Occitan *volpilh*, Old Italian *volpiglio*, Spanish *vulpeja* 'vixen')

In contrast, the Italian, Portuguese and Spanish words of Germanic origin borrowed from French or directly from Germanic retain /gw/ ~ /g/, e.g. It, Sp. *guerra* 'war', alongside /g/ in French *guerre*). These examples show a clear consequence of bilingualism, that sometimes even changed the first syllable of the Latin words. One example of a Latin word influencing an Old Low Franconian loan is *framboise* 'raspberry', from OF *frambeise*, from OLF **brāmbesi* 'blackberry' (cf. Dutch *braambes*, *braambezie*; akin to German *Brombeere*, English dial. *bramberry*) blended with LL *fraga* or OF *fraie* 'strawberry', which explains the replacement [b] > [f] and in turn the final -se of *framboise* added to OF *fraie* to make *freise*, modern *fraise* (≠ Wallon *frève*, Occitan *fraga*, Romanian *fragă*, Italian *fragola*, *fravola* 'strawberry').^{[24][25]}

Mildred Pope (1934) estimated that perhaps still 15% of the vocabulary of modern French derives from Germanic sources (while the proportion was larger in Old French, because the Middle-French language borrowed heavily from Latin and Italian).

Earliest written Old French

At the Third Council of Tours in 813, priests were ordered to preach in the vernacular language (either Romance or Germanic), since the common people could no longer understand formal Latin.

The earliest documents said to be written in the Gallo-Romance that prefigures French – after the Reichenau and Kassel glosses (8th and 9th centuries) – are the Oaths of Strasbourg (treaties and charters into which King Charles the Bald entered in 842):

Pro Deo amur et pro Christian poblo et nostro commun salvament, d'ist di en avant, in quant Deus savir et podir me dunat, si salvarai eo cist meon fradre Karlo, et in aiudha et in cadhuna cosa ... (For the love of God and for the Christian people, and our common salvation, from this day forward, as God will give me the knowledge and the power, I will defend my brother Charles with my help in everything ...)

The second-oldest document in Old French is the Eulalia sequence, which is important for linguistic reconstruction of Old French pronunciation due to its consistent spelling.

The royal House of Capet, founded by Hugh Capet in 987, inaugurated the development of northern French culture in and around Île-de-France, which slowly but firmly asserted its ascendancy over the more southerly areas of Aquitaine and Tolosa (Toulouse); however, The Capetians' *langue d'oïl*, the forerunner of modern standard French, did not begin to become the common speech of all of France until after the French Revolution.

Transition to Middle French

In the Late Middle Ages, the Old French dialects diverged into a number of distinct *langues d'oïl*, among which Middle French proper was the dialect of the Île-de-France region. During the Early Modern period, French was established as the official language of the Kingdom of France throughout the realm, including the *langue d'oc*-speaking territories in the south. It was only in the 17th to 18th centuries – with the development especially of popular literature of the Bibliothèque bleue – that a standardized Classical French spread throughout France alongside the regional dialects.

Literature

The material and cultural conditions in France and associated territories around the year 1100 triggered what Charles Homer Haskins termed the "Renaissance of the 12th century", resulting in a profusion of creative works in a variety of genres. Old French gave way to Middle French in the mid-14th century, paving the way for early French Renaissance literature of the 15th century.

The earliest extant French literary texts date from the ninth century, but very few texts before the 11th century have survived. The first literary works written in Old French were saints' lives. The Canticle of Saint Eulalie, written in the second half of the 9th century, is generally accepted as the first such text.

At the beginning of the 13th century, Jean Bodel, in his Chanson de Saisnes, divided medieval French narrative literature into three subject areas: the Matter of France or Matter of Charlemagne; the Matter of Rome (romances in an ancient setting); and the Matter of Britain (Arthurian romances and Breton lais). The first of these is the subject area of the *chansons de geste* ("songs of exploits" or "songs of (heroic) deeds"), epic poems typically composed in ten-syllable assonanced (occasionally rhymed) *laisses*. More than one hundred *chansons de geste* have survived in around three hundred manuscripts.^[26] The oldest and most celebrated of the *chansons de geste* is The Song of Roland (earliest version composed in the late 11th century).

Bertrand de Bar-sur-Aube in his Girart de Vienne set out a grouping of the *chansons de geste* into three cycles: the Geste du roi centering on Charlemagne, the Geste de Garin de Monglane (whose central character was William of Orange), and the Geste de Doon de Mayence or the "rebel vassal cycle", the most famous characters of which were Renaud de Montauban and Girart de Roussillon.

A fourth grouping, not listed by Bertrand, is the Crusade cycle, dealing with the First Crusade and its immediate aftermath.

Jean Bodel's other two categories—the "Matter of Rome" and the "Matter of Britain"—concern the French romance or *roman*. Around a hundred verse romances survive from the period 1150–1220.^[27] From around 1200 on, the tendency was increasingly to write the romances in prose (many of the earlier verse romances were adapted into prose versions), although new verse romances continued to be written to the end of the 14th century.^[28]

The most important romance of the 13th century is the Romance of the Rose, which breaks considerably from the conventions of the chivalric adventure story.

Medieval French lyric poetry was indebted to the poetic and cultural traditions in Southern France and Provence—including Toulouse, Poitiers, and the Aquitaine region—where *langue d'oc* was spoken (Occitan language); in their turn, the Provençal poets were greatly influenced by poetic traditions from the Hispano-Arab world.

The Occitan or Provençal poets were called troubadours, from the word *trobar* "to find, to invent". Lyric poets in Old French are called trouvères.

By the late 13th century, the poetic tradition in France had begun to develop in ways that differed significantly from the troubadour poets, both in content and in the use of certain fixed forms. The new poetic (as well as musical: some of the earliest medieval music has lyrics composed in Old French by the earliest composers known by name) tendencies are apparent in the *Roman de Fauvel* in 1310 and 1314, a satire on abuses in the medieval church, filled with medieval motets, lais, rondeaux and other new secular forms of poetry and music (mostly anonymous, but with several pieces by Philippe de Vitry, who would coin the expression *ars nova* to distinguish the new musical practice from the music of the immediately preceding age). The best-known poet and composer of *ars nova* secular music and chansons of the incipient Middle French period was Guillaume de Machaut.

Discussions about the origins of non-religious theater (*théâtre profane*) – both drama and farce—in the Middle Ages remain controversial, but the idea of a continuous popular tradition stemming from Latin comedy and tragedy to the 9th century seems unlikely.

Most historians place the origin of medieval *drama* in the church's liturgical dialogues and "tropes". Mystery plays were eventually transferred from the monastery church to the chapter house or refectory hall and finally to the open air, and the vernacular was substituted for Latin. In the 12th century one finds the earliest extant passages in French appearing as refrains inserted into liturgical dramas in Latin, such as a Saint Nicholas (patron saint of the student clerics) play and a Saint Stephen play. An early French dramatic play is *Le Jeu d'Adam* (c. 1150) written in octosyllabic rhymed couplets with Latin stage directions (implying that it was written by Latin-speaking clerics for a lay public).

A large body of fables survive in Old French; these include (mostly anonymous) literature dealing with the recurring trickster character of Reynard the Fox. Marie de France was also active in this genre, producing the *Ysopet* (Little Aesop) series of fables in verse. Related to the fable was the more bawdy *fabliau*, which covered topics such as cuckolding and corrupt clergy. These *fabliaux* would be an important source for Chaucer and for the Renaissance short story (*conte* or *nouvelle*).

Phonology

Old French was constantly changing and evolving; however, the form in the late 12th century, as attested in a great deal of mostly poetic writings, can be considered standard. The writing system at this time was more phonetic than that used in most subsequent centuries. In particular, all written consonants (including final ones) were pronounced, except for s preceding non-stop consonants and t in *et*, and final *e* was pronounced [ə]. The phonological system can be summarised as follows:^[29]

Consonants

Old French consonants

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Nasal</u>	<u>m</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>ɲ</u>		
<u>Plosive</u>	<u>p b</u>	<u>t d</u>		<u>k g</u>	
<u>Affricate</u>		<u>ts dz</u>	<u>tʃ dʒ</u>		
<u>Fricative</u>	<u>f v</u>	<u>s z</u>			(h)
<u>Lateral</u>		<u>l</u>	<u>ʎ</u>		
<u>Trill</u>		<u>r</u>			

Notes:

- All obstruents (plosives, fricatives and affricates) were subject to word-final devoicing, which was usually indicated in the orthography.
- The affricates /ts/, /dz/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ became fricatives ([s], [z], [ʃ], [ʒ]) in Middle French.
 - /ts/ had three spellings – *c* before *e* or *i*, *ç* before other vowels, or *z* at the end of a word – as seen in *cent*, *chançon*, *priz* ("a hundred, song, price").
 - /dz/ was written as *z*, as in *doze* "twelve", and did not occur word-initially.
- /ʎ/ (l mouillé), as in *conseil*, *travaillier* ("advice, to work"), became /j/ in Modern French.
- /ɲ/ appeared not only in the middle of a word, but also at the end, as in *poing* "fist". At the end of a word, /ɲ/ was later lost, leaving a nasalized vowel.
- /h/ was found only in Germanic loanwords and was later lost (although it is transphonologized as the so-called aspirated h that blocks *liaison*). In native Latin words, /h/ was lost early on, as in *om*, *uem*, from Latin *homō*.
- Intervocalic /d/ from both Latin /t/ and /d/ was lenited to [ð] in the early period (cf. contemporary Spanish: *amado* [aˈmaðo]). At the end of words it was also devoiced to [θ]. In some texts it was sometimes written as *dh* or *th* (*aiudha*, *cadhuna*, *Ludher*, *vithe*). By 1100 it disappeared altogether.^[30]

Vowels

In Old French, the nasal vowels were not separate phonemes but only allophones of the oral vowels before a nasal consonant. The nasal consonant was fully pronounced; *bon* was pronounced [bõn] (Modern French [bɔ̃]). Nasal vowels were present even in open syllables before nasals where Modern French has oral vowels, as in *bone* [bõnə] (Modern French *bonne* [bɔ̃n]).

Monophthongs

Old French vowels

		Front	Central	Back
Close	oral	i y		u
	nasal	[ĩ] [ỹ]		
Close-mid	oral	e	ə	
	nasal	[ẽ]		[õ]
Open-mid		ɛ		ɔ
Open	oral	a		
	nasal	[ã]		

Notes:

- /o/ had formerly existed but then closed to /u/; the original Western Romance /u/ having previously been fronted to /y/ across most of what is now France and northern Italy.
 - /o/ would later appear again when /aw/ monophthongized and also when /ɔ/ closed in certain positions (such as when it was followed by original /s/ or /z/ but not by /ts/, which later became /s/).
 - /õ/ may have similarly become closed to /ũ/, in at least in some dialects, since it was borrowed into Middle English as /u : n/ > /aʊn/ (Latin *computāre* > OF *conter* > English *count*; Latin *rotundum* > OF *ront* > English *round*; Latin *bonitātem* > OF *bonté* > English *bounty*). In any case, traces of such a change were erased in later stages of French, when the close nasal vowels /ĩ ỹ õ~ũ/ were opened to become /ẽ ẽ̃ ỹ̃̃/.
- /ǣ/ may have existed in the unstressed third-person plural verb ending *-ent*, but it may have already passed to /ə/, which is known to have happened no later than the Middle French period.

Diphthongs and triphthongs

Late Old French diphthongs and triphthongs

	IPA	Example	Meaning
falling			
Oral	/aw/	<u>chevaus</u>	horse
	/ɔj/	<u>toit</u>	roof
	/ɔw/	<u>coup</u>	blow, hit
	/ew/ ~ /øw/	<u>neveu</u>	nephew
	/iw/ ~ /iʏ/	<u>tiule</u>	tile
Nasal	/ěj/	<u>plein</u>	full
	/ōj/	<u>loing</u>	far
rising			
Oral	/je/	<u>pié</u>	foot
	/ʏi/	<u>fruit</u>	fruit
	/we/ ~ /wø/	<u>cuer</u>	heart
Nasal	/jē/	<u>bien</u>	well
	/ʏi/	<u>juignet</u>	July
	/wē/	<u>cuens</u>	count (nom.sg.)
triphthongs stress always falls on middle vowel			
Oral	/ɛaw/	<u>beaus</u>	beautiful
	/jew/	<u>Dieu</u>	God
	/wew/ ~ /wøw/	<u>jueu</u>	Jew

Notes:

- In Early Old French (up to about the mid-12th century), the spelling ⟨ai⟩ represented a diphthong /aj/ instead of the later monophthong /ɛ/,^[31] and ⟨ei⟩ represented the diphthong /ej/, which merged with /oj/ in Late Old French (except when it was nasalized).
- In Early Old French, the diphthongs described above as "rising" may have been falling diphthongs (/iɛ/, /yɔ/, /ue/). In earlier works with vowel assonance, the diphthong written ⟨ie⟩ did not assonate with any pure vowels, which suggests that it cannot have simply been /je/.
- The pronunciation of the vowels written ⟨ue⟩ and ⟨eu⟩ is debated. In the first records of Early Old French, they represented and were written as /uo/, /ou/, and by Middle French, they had both merged as /ø ~ œ/, but the transitional pronunciations are unclear.
- Early Old French had additional triphthongs /iej/ and /uoj/ (equivalent to diphthongs followed by /j/); these soon merged into /i/ and /ʏi/ respectively.
- The diphthong ⟨iu⟩ was rare and had merged into ⟨ui⟩ by Middle French (OF *tiule* > MF *tuile* 'tile'; OF *siure* > Late OF *suire* > MF *suivre* 'follow').

Hiatus

In addition to diphthongs, Old French had many instances of hiatus between adjacent vowels because of the loss of an intervening consonant. Manuscripts generally do not distinguish hiatus from true diphthongs, but modern scholarly transcription indicates it with a diaeresis, as in Modern French:

- Latin *audīre* > OF *oīr* /u 'ir/ 'hear' (Modern *ouīr*)
- Vulgar Latin **vidūta* > OF *veüe* /və 'y.ə/ 'seen' (Modern *vue*)
- Latin *rēgīnam* > OF *reīne*, /rə 'inə/ 'queen' (Modern *reine*)
- Latin *pāgēnsem* > OF *paīs* /pa 'is/ 'country' (Modern *pays*)
- Latin *augustum* > OF *aoust* /a 'u(s)t/ 'August' (Modern *août*)
- Latin *patellam* > OF *paelle* /pa 'ɛlə/ 'pan' (Modern *poêle*)
- Late Latin *quaternum* > OF *quaier* /kwa 'jer/ 'booklet, quire' (Modern *cahier*)

- Late Latin *aetāticum* > OF *aage*, *eage* /a ' ad̥zə/ ~ /ə ' ad̥zə/ 'age' (Modern *âge*)

Grammar

Nouns

Old French maintained a two-case system, with a **nominative case** and an **oblique case**, for longer than some other Romance languages as Spanish and Italian did. Case distinctions, at least in the masculine **gender**, were marked on both the **definite article** and the noun itself. Thus, the masculine noun *li veisins* "the neighbour" (Latin *vicīnus* /wɪ ' ki : nʊs/ > Proto-Western-Romance **vecīnos* /ve ' ʧsinos/ > OF *veisins* /vej ' zīns/; Modern French *le voisin* /vwazɛ̃/) was declined as follows:

Evolution of the nominal masculine inflection from Classical Latin to Old French

		Latin	Vulgar Latin	Old French
Singular	nominative	<i>ille vicīnus</i>	<i>(el)le vecīnos</i>	<i>li veisins</i>
	oblique (Latin accusative)	<i>illum vicīnum</i>	<i>(el)lo vecīno</i>	<i>le veisin</i>
Plural	nominative	<i>illī vicīnī</i>	<i>(el)lī vecīni</i>	<i>li veisin</i>
	oblique (Latin accusative)	<i>illōs vicīnōs</i>	<i>(el)los vecīnos</i>	<i>les veisins</i>

In later Old French, the distinctions had become moribund. As in most other Romance languages, it was the **oblique case** form that usually survived to become the Modern French form: *l'enfant* "the child" represents the old oblique (Latin accusative *infāntem*); the Old French nominative was *li enfes* (Latin *infāns*). There are some cases with significant differences between nominative and oblique forms (derived from Latin nouns with a stress shift between the nominative and other cases) in which either it is the nominative form that survives or both forms survive with different meanings:

- Both OFr *li sire*, *le sieur* (Latin *seīior*, *seīiōrem*) and *le seignor* (nom. [†]*sendre*;[32] Latin *senior*, *seniōrem*) survive in the vocabulary of later French (*sire*, *sieur*, *seigneur*) as different ways to refer to a feudal **lord**.
- Modern French *sœur* "sister" is the nominative form (Old French *suer* < Latin nominative *soror*); the Old French oblique form *seror* (< Latin accusative *sorōrem*) no longer survives.
- Modern French *prêtre* "priest" is the nominative form (Old French *prestre* < *presbyter*); the Old French oblique form *prevoire*, later *provoire* (< *presbyterem*) survives only in the Paris street name *Rue des Prouvaires*.
- Modern French indefinite pronoun *on* "one" continues Old French nominative *hom* "man" (< *homō*); *homme* "man" continues the oblique form (OF *home* < *hominem*).

In a few cases in which the only distinction between forms was the nominative -s ending, the -s was preserved in spelling to distinguish otherwise-homonymous words. An example is *fils* "son" (< Latin nominative *filius*), spelled to distinguish it from *fil* "wire". In this case, a later spelling pronunciation has resulted in the modern pronunciation /fis/ (earlier /fi/).

As in Spanish and Italian, the neuter gender was eliminated, and most old neuter nouns became masculine. Some Latin neuter plurals were reanalysed as feminine singulars: Latin *gaudium* was more widely used in the plural form *gaudia*, which was taken for a singular in Vulgar Latin and ultimately led to modern French *la joie*, "joy" (feminine singular).

Nouns were declined in the following declensions:

		Class I (feminine)			Class II (masculine)		
		Class I normal	Class Ia		Class II normal		Class IIa
meaning		"woman"	"thing"	"city"	"neighbor"	"servant"	"father"
sg.	nominative	la fame	la riens	la citez	li veisins	li sergenz	li pere
	oblique		la rien	la cité	le veisin	le sergent	le pere
pl.	nominative	les fames	les riens	les citez	li veisin	li sergent	li pere
	oblique				les veisins	les sergenz	les peres

		Class III (both)							
		Class IIIa	Class IIIb	Class IIIc	Class IIId				
meaning		"singer"	"baron"	"nun"	"sister"	"child"	"priest"	"lord"	"count"
sg.	nominative	<i>li chantere</i>	<i>li ber</i>	<i>la none</i>	<i>la suer</i>	<i>li enfes</i>	<i>li prestre</i>	<i>li sire</i>	<i>li cuens</i>
	oblique	<i>le chanteor</i>	<i>le baron</i>	<i>la nonain</i>	<i>la seror</i>	<i>l'enfant</i>	<i>le prevoire</i>	<i>le sieur</i>	<i>le conte</i>
pl.	nominative	<i>li chanteor</i>	<i>li baron</i>	<i>les nones</i>	<i>les serors</i>	<i>li enfant</i>	<i>li prevoire</i>	<i>li sieur</i>	<i>li conte</i>
	oblique	<i>les chanteors</i>	<i>les barons</i>	<i>les nonains</i>	<i>les serors</i>	<i>les enfanz</i>	<i>les prevoires</i>	<i>les sieurs</i>	<i>les contes</i>

Class I is derived from the Latin first declension. Class Ia mostly comes from Latin feminine nouns in the third declension. Class II is derived from the Latin second declension. Class IIa generally stems from second-declension nouns ending in *-er* and from third-declension masculine nouns; in both cases, the Latin nominative singular did not end in *-s*, which is preserved in Old French.

The classes show various analogical developments: *-es* from the accusative instead of *-Ø* (*-e* after a consonant cluster) in Class I nominative plural (Latin *-ae*), *li pere* instead of **li peres* (Latin *illi patres*) in Class IIa nominative plural, modelled on Class II, etc.

Class III nouns show a separate form in the nominative singular that does not occur in any of the other forms. IIIa nouns ended in *-ātor*, *-ātōrem* in Latin and preserve the stress shift; IIIb nouns also had a stress shift, from *-ō* to *-ōnem*. IIIc nouns are an Old French creation and have no clear Latin antecedent. IIId nouns represent various other types of third-declension Latin nouns with stress shift or a change of consonant (*soror*, *sorōrem*; *īnfāns*, *īnfāntem*; *presbyter*, *presbyterem*; *seīior*, *seīiōrem*; *comes*, *comitem*).

Regular feminine forms of masculine nouns are formed by adding an *-e* to the masculine stem unless the masculine stem already ends in *-e*. For example, *bergier* (shepherd) becomes *bergiere* (Modern French *berger* and *bergère*).

Adjectives

Adjectives agree in terms of number, gender and case with the noun that they are qualifying. Thus, a feminine plural noun in the nominative case requires any qualifying adjectives to be feminine, plural and nominative. For example, in *femes riches*, *riche* has to be in the feminine plural form.

Adjectives can be divided into three declensional classes:^[33]

- Class I corresponding roughly to Latin 1st- and 2nd-declension adjectives
- Class II corresponding roughly to Latin 3rd-declension adjectives
- Class III containing primarily the descendants of Latin synthetic comparative forms in *-ior*, *-iōrem*.

Class I adjectives have a feminine singular form (nominative and oblique) ending in *-e*. They can be further subdivided into two subclasses, based on the masculine nominative singular form. Class Ia adjectives have a masculine nominative singular ending in *-s*:

bon "good" (< Latin *bonus*, > modern French *bon*)

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular
Nominative	<i>bons</i>	<i>bon</i>	<i>bone</i>	<i>bones</i>	<i>bon</i>
Oblique	<i>bon</i>	<i>bons</i>			—

For Class Ib adjectives, the masculine nominative singular ends in *-e*, like the feminine. There are descendants of Latin second- and third-declension adjectives ending in *-er* in the nominative singular:

aspre "harsh" (< Latin *asper*, > modern French *âpre*)

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular
Nominative	<i>aspre</i>	<i>aspre</i>	<i>aspre</i>	<i>aspres</i>	<i>aspre</i>
Oblique		<i>aspres</i>			—

For Class II adjectives, the feminine singular is not marked by the ending *-e*:

granz "big, great" (< Latin *grandis*, > modern French *grand*)

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular
Nominative	<i>granz</i>	<i>grant</i>	<i>granz/grant</i>	<i>granz</i>	<i>grant</i>
Oblique	<i>grant</i>	<i>granz</i>	<i>grant</i>		—

An important subgroup of Class II adjectives is the present participial forms in *-ant*.

Class III adjectives have a stem alternation, resulting from stress shift in the Latin third declension and a distinct neuter form:

mieudre "better" (< Latin *melior*, > modern French *meilleur*)

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular
Nominative	<i>mieudre(s)</i>	<i>meillor</i>	<i>mieudre</i>	<i>meillors</i>	<i>mieuz</i>
Oblique	<i>meillor</i>	<i>meillors</i>	<i>meillor</i>		—

In later Old French, Classes II and III tended to be moved across to Class I, which was complete by Middle French. Modern French thus has only a single adjective declension, unlike most other Romance languages, which have two or more.

Verbs

Verbs in Old French show the same extreme phonological deformations as other Old French words; however, morphologically, Old French verbs are extremely conservative in preserving intact most of the Latin alternations and irregularities that had been inherited in Proto-Romance. Old French has much less analogical reformation than Modern French has and significantly less than the oldest stages of other languages (such as Old Spanish) despite the fact that the various phonological developments in Gallo-Romance and Proto-French led to complex alternations in the majority of commonly-used verbs.

For example, the Old French verb *laver* "to wash" (Latin *lavāre*) is conjugated *je lef*, *tu leves*, *il leve* in the present indicative and *je lef*, *tu les*, *il let* in the present subjunctive, in both cases regular phonological developments from Latin indicative *lavō*, *lavās*, *lavat* and subjunctive *lavem*, *lavēs*, *lavet*. The following paradigm is typical in showing the phonologically regular but morphologically irregular alternations of most paradigms:

- The alternation *je lef* ~ *tu leves* is a regular result of the final devoicing triggered by loss of final /o/ but not /a/.
- The alternation *laver* ~ *tu leves* is a regular result of the diphthongization of a stressed open syllable /a/ into /ae/ > /æ/ > /e/.
- The alternation *je lef* ~ *tu les* ~ *il let* in the subjunctive is a regular result of the simplification of the final clusters /fs/ and /ft/, resulting from loss of /e/ in final syllables.

Modern French, on the other hand, has *je lave*, *tu laves*, *il lave* in both indicative and subjunctive, reflecting significant analogical developments: analogical borrowing of unstressed vowel /a/, analogical -e in the first singular (from verbs like *j'entre*, with a regular -e) and wholesale replacement of the subjunctive with forms modelled on -ir/-oir/-re verbs. All serve to eliminate the various alternations in the Old French verb paradigm. Even modern "irregular" verbs are not immune from analogy: For example, Old French *je vif*, *tu vis*, *il vit* (*vivre* "to live") has yielded to modern *je vis*, *tu vis*, *il vit*, eliminating the unpredictable -f in the first-person singular.

The simple past also shows extensive analogical reformation and simplification in Modern French, as compared with Old French.

The Latin pluperfect was preserved in very early Old French as a past tense with a value similar to a preterite or imperfect. For example, the Sequence of Saint Eulalia (878 AD) has past-tense forms such as *avret* (< Latin *habuerat*), *voldret* (< Latin *voluerat*), alternating with past-tense forms from the Latin perfect (continued as the modern "simple past"). Old Occitan also preserved this tense, with a conditional value; Spanish still preserves this tense (the -ra imperfect subjunctive), as does Portuguese (in its original value as a pluperfect indicative).

Verb alternations

In Latin, stress was determined automatically by the number of syllables in a word and the weight (length) of the syllables. That resulted in certain automatic stress shifts between related forms in a paradigm, depending on the nature of the suffixes added. For example, in *pensō* "I think", the first syllable was stressed, but in *pensāmus* "we think", the second syllable was stressed. In many Romance languages, vowels diphthongized in stressed syllables under certain circumstances but not in unstressed syllables, resulting in alternations in verb paradigms: Spanish *pienso* "I think" vs. *pensamos* "we think" (*pensar* "to think"), or *cuento* "I tell" vs. *contamos* "we tell" (*contar* "to tell").

In the development of French, at least five vowels diphthongized in stressed, open syllables. Combined with other stress-dependent developments, that yielded 15 or so types of alternations in so-called strong verbs in Old French. For example, /a/ diphthongized to /ai/ before nasal stops in stressed, open syllables but not in unstressed syllables, yielding *aim* "I love" (Latin *amō*) but *amons* "we love" (Latin *amāmus*).

The different types are as follows:

Vowel alternations in Old French verbs

Vowel alternation		Environment	Example (-er conjugation)				Example (other conjugation)			
Stressed	Unstressed		Latin etymon	3rd singular pres. ind.	Infinitive	meaning	Latin etymon	3rd singular pres. ind.	Infinitive / Other form	meaning
/e/	/a/	free /a/	<i>lavāre</i>	<i>leve</i>	<i>laver</i>	"to wash"	<i>parere</i> > * <i>parīre</i>	<i>pert</i>	<i>parir</i>	"to give birth"
/āĩ/	/ā/	free /a/ + nasal	<i>amāre</i>	<i>aime</i>	<i>amer</i>	"to love"	<i>manēre</i>	<i>maint</i>	<i>maneir, manoir</i>	"to remain"
/je/	/e/	palatal + free /a/	* <i>accapāre</i>	<i>achieve</i>	<i>achever</i>	"to achieve"				
/i/	/e/	palatal + /a/ + palatal	* <i>concacāre</i>	<i>conchie</i>	<i>concheer</i>	"to expel"	<i>iacēre</i>	<i>gist</i>	<i>gesir</i>	"to lie (down)"
/a/	/e/	palatal + blocked /a/	* <i>accapitāre</i>	<i>achate</i>	<i>acheter</i>	"to buy"	<i>cadere</i> > * <i>cadēre</i>	<i>chiet</i>	<i>cheoir</i>	"to fall"
/a/	/e/	intertonic /a/ + palatal?	* <i>tripaliāre</i>	<i>travaille</i>	<i>traveillier</i>	"to torment, make suffer"				
/je/	/e/	free /ɛ/	<i>levāre</i>	<i>lieve</i>	<i>lever</i>	"to raise"	<i>sedēre</i>	<i>siet</i>	<i>seeir, seoir</i>	"to sit; suit, be fitting"
/jẽ/	/ẽ/	free /ɛ/ + nasal					<i>tremere</i> > * <i>cremere</i>	<i>crient</i>	<i>creindre</i> (var. <i>cremir, -oir</i>)	"to fear"
/i/	/ej/	/ɛ/ + palatal	<i>pretiāre</i>	<i>prise</i>	<i>preiser</i>	"to value"	<i>exīre</i>	<i>ist</i>	<i>eissir</i>	"to exit, go out"
/ɛ/	/e/	intertonic /ɛ, e/ + double cons.	<i>appellāre</i>	<i>apele</i>	<i>apeler</i>	"to call"				
/oj/	/e/	free /e/	<i>adhaerāre</i> > * <i>adēsāre</i>	<i>adoise</i>	<i>adeser</i>	"to touch"				
/ẽĩ/	/ẽ/	free /e/ + nasal	<i>mināre</i>	<i>meine</i>	<i>mener</i>	"to lead"				
/i/	/e/	palatal + free /e/								
/oj/	/i/	intertonic /e/ + palatal	-	<i>charroie</i>	<i>charrier</i>	"to cart around"				
/we/	/u/	free /ɔ/	* <i>tropāre</i>	<i>trueve</i>	<i>truver</i>	"to invent, discover"	<i>morī</i> > * <i>morīre</i>	<i>muert</i>	<i>mourir</i>	"to die"
/uj/	/oj/	/ɔ/ + palatal	* <i>appodiāre</i>	<i>apuie</i>	<i>apoiier</i>	"to lean"				
/ew/	/u/	free /o/	<i>dēmōrārī</i>	<i>demeure</i>	<i>demo(u)rer</i>	"to stay"	<i>cōnsuere</i> > * <i>cōsere</i>	<i>queust</i>	<i>co(u)sdre</i>	"to sew"
/u/	/e/	intertonic blocked /o/	* <i>corruptiāre</i>	<i>courouce</i>	<i>courecier</i>	"to get angry"				
/ũ/	/ā/	intertonic blocked /o/ + nasal	<i>calumniārī</i>	<i>chalonge</i>	<i>chalengier</i>	"to challenge"				

In Modern French, the verbs in the -er class have been systematically levelled. Generally, the "weak" (unstressed) form predominates, but there are some exceptions (such as modern *aimer/nous aimons*). The only remaining alternations are in verbs like *acheter/j'achète* and *jeter/je jette*, with unstressed /ə/ alternating with stressed /ɛ/ and in (largely-learned) verbs like *adhérer/j'adhère*, with unstressed

/e/ alternating with stressed /ɛ/. Many of the non-*er* verbs have become obsolete, and many of the remaining verbs have been levelled; however, a few alternations remain in what are now known as irregular verbs, such as *je tiens, nous tenons; je dois, nous devons* and *je meurs, nous mourons*.

Some verbs had a more irregular alternation between different-length stems, with a longer, stressed stem alternating with a shorter, unstressed stem. That was a regular development stemming from the loss of unstressed intertonic vowels, which remained when they were stressed:

- *j'aiulaidier* "help" < *adiūtō, adiūtāre*
- *j'araison/araisnier* "speak to" < *adratiōnō, adratiōnāre*
- *je deraison/deraisnier* "argue" < *dēратиōnō, dēратиōnāre*
- *je desjun/disner* "dine" < *disiēiūnō, disiēiūnāre*
- *je manjulmangier* "eat" < *mandūcō, mandūcāre*
- *je parollparler* "speak" < **paraulō, *paraulāre* < *parabolō, parabolāre*

The alternation of *je desjun, disner* is particularly complicated; it appears that *disiēiūnāre* > Western Romance /desjeju 'nare > /desjej 'nare/ (preliminary intertonic loss) > /desi 'nare/ (triphthong reduction) > /disi 'nare/ (metaphony) > /dis 'ner/ (further intertonic loss and other proto-French developments). Both stems have become full verbs in Modern French: *déjeuner* "to have lunch" and *dîner* "to dine". Furthermore, *déjeuner* does not derive directly from *je desjun* (< **disi(ēi)ūnō*, with total loss of unstressed *-ēi-*). Instead, it comes from Old French *desjeūner*, based on the alternative form *je desjeūn* (< **disiē(i)ūnō*, with loss of only *-i-*, likely influenced by *jeūner* "to fast" < Old French *jeūner* < *je jeūn* /dʒe. 'yn/ "I fast" < *iē(i)ūnō*: *iē-* is an initial rather than intertonic so the vowel *-ē-* does not disappear).

Example of regular -er verb: *durer* (to last)

	Indicative				Subjunctive		Conditional	Imperative
	Present	Simple past	Imperfect	Future	Present	Imperfect	Present	Present
je	<i>dur</i>	<i>durai</i>	<i>duroie</i>	<i>durerai</i>	<i>dur</i>	<i>durasse</i>	<i>dureroie</i>	—
tu	<i>dures</i>	<i>duras</i>	<i>durois</i>	<i>dureras</i>	<i>durs</i>	<i>durasses</i>	<i>durerois</i>	<i>dure</i>
il	<i>dure</i>	<i>dura</i>	<i>duroit</i>	<i>durera</i>	<i>durt</i>	<i>durast</i>	<i>dureroit</i>	—
nos	<i>durons</i>	<i>durames</i>	<i>duriensl-ions</i>	<i>durerons</i>	<i>durons</i>	<i>durissons/-issiens</i>	<i>durerionsl-ions</i>	<i>durons</i>
vos	<i>durez</i>	<i>durastes</i>	<i>duriez</i>	<i>dureroizl-ez</i>	<i>durez</i>	<i>durissoizl-issez/-issiez</i>	<i>dureriezl-iez</i>	<i>durez</i>
ils	<i>durent</i>	<i>durerent</i>	<i>duroient</i>	<i>dureront</i>	<i>durent</i>	<i>durassent</i>	<i>dureroient</i>	—

Non-finite forms:

- Infinitive: *durer*
- Present participle: *durant*
- Past Participle: *duré*

Auxiliary verb: *avoir*

Example of regular -ir verb: *fenir* (to end)

	Indicative				Subjunctive		Conditional	Imperative
	Present	Simple past	Imperfect	Future	Present	Imperfect	Present	Present
je	<i>fenis</i>	<i>feni</i>	<i>fenissoie</i>	<i>fenirai</i>	<i>fenisse</i>	<i>fenisse</i>	<i>feniroie</i>	—
tu	<i>fenis</i>	<i>fenis</i>	<i>fenissoies</i>	<i>feniras</i>	<i>fenisses</i>	<i>fenisses</i>	<i>fenirois</i>	<i>fenis</i>
il	<i>fenist</i>	<i>feni(t)</i>	<i>fenissoit</i>	<i>fenira</i>	<i>fenisse(t)</i>	<i>fenist</i>	<i>feniroit</i>	—
nos	<i>fenissons</i>	<i>fenimes</i>	<i>fenissiens</i>	<i>fenirons</i>	<i>fenissons</i>	<i>fenissons/-iens</i>	<i>fenirions</i>	<i>fenissons</i>
vos	<i>fenissez</i>	<i>fenistes</i>	<i>fenissiez</i>	<i>feniroizl-ez</i>	<i>fenissez</i>	<i>fenissoizl-ez/-iez</i>	<i>feniriez</i>	<i>fenissez</i>
ils	<i>fenissent</i>	<i>fenirent</i>	<i>fenissoient</i>	<i>feniront</i>	<i>fenissent</i>	<i>fenissent</i>	<i>feniroient</i>	—

Non-finite forms:

- Infinitive: *fenir*
- Present participle: *fenissant*
- Past participle: *feni(t)*

Auxiliary verb: *avoir*

Example of regular *-re* verb: *corre* (to run)

	Indicative				Subjunctive		Conditional	Imperative
	Present	Simple past	Imperfect	Future	Present	Imperfect	Present	Present
je	<i>cor</i>	<i>corui</i>	<i>coroie</i>	<i>corrai</i>	<i>core</i>	<i>corusse</i>	<i>corroie</i>	—
tu	<i>cors</i>	<i>corus</i>	<i>coroies</i>	<i>corras</i>	<i>cores</i>	<i>corusses</i>	<i>corroies</i>	<i>cor</i>
il	<i>cort</i>	<i>coru(t)</i>	<i>coroit</i>	<i>corra</i>	<i>core(t)</i>	<i>corust</i>	<i>corroit</i>	—
nos	<i>corons</i>	<i>corumes</i>	<i>coriens</i>	<i>corrons</i>	<i>corons</i>	<i>corussons/-iens</i>	<i>corriens</i>	<i>corons</i>
vos	<i>corez</i>	<i>corustes</i>	<i>coriiez</i>	<i>corroiz/-ez</i>	<i>corez</i>	<i>corussoiz/-ez/-iez</i>	<i>corriiez</i>	<i>corez</i>
ils	<i>corent</i>	<i>corurent</i>	<i>coroient</i>	<i>corront</i>	<i>corent</i>	<i>corussent</i>	<i>corroient</i>	—

Non-finite forms:

- Infinitive: *corre*
- Present participle: *corant*
- Past participle: *coru(t)*

Auxiliary verb: *estre*

Examples of auxiliary verbs

avoir (to have)

	Indicative				Subjunctive		Conditional	Imperative
	Present	Simple past	Imperfect	Future	Present	Imperfect	Present	Present
je	<i>ai</i>	<i>eüi, oi</i>	<i>avoie</i>	<i>aurai</i>	<i>ai</i>	<i>eüsse</i>	<i>auroie</i>	—
tu	<i>aïs</i> (later <i>as</i>)	<i>eüs</i>	<i>avois</i>	<i>auras</i>	<i>aïs</i>	<i>eüsses</i>	<i>aurois</i>	<i>ave</i>
il	<i>ai</i> (later <i>a</i>)	<i>eü(t), ot</i>	<i>avoit</i>	<i>aura</i>	<i>ai</i>	<i>eüst</i>	<i>auroit</i>	—
nos	<i>avons</i>	<i>eümes</i>	<i>aviensl/-ions</i>	<i>aurons</i>	<i>aions</i>	<i>eüssonsl/-issiens</i>	<i>auravonsl/-ions</i>	<i>avons</i>
vos	<i>avez</i>	<i>eüstes</i>	<i>aviiez</i>	<i>auroiz/-ez</i>	<i>aiez</i>	<i>eüssoizl/-issezl/-issiez</i>	<i>auravezl/-iez</i>	<i>avez</i>
ils	<i>ont</i>	<i>eürent</i>	<i>avoient</i>	<i>auront</i>	<i>ont</i>	<i>eüssent</i>	<i>auroient</i>	—

Non-finite forms:

- Infinitive: *avoir* (earlier *aveir*)
- Present participle: *aiant*
- Past participle: *eü(t)*

Auxiliary verb: *avoir*

estre (to be)

	Indicative				Subjunctive		Conditional	Imperative
	Present	Simple past	Imperfect	Future	Present	Imperfect	Present	Present
je	<i>suis</i>	<i>fui</i>	<i>(i)ere esteie > estoie</i>	<i>(i)er serai estrai</i>	<i>seie > soie</i>	<i>fusse</i>	<i>sereie > seroie estreie > estroie</i>	—
tu	<i>(i)es</i>	<i>fus</i>	<i>(i)eres esteies > estoies</i>	<i>(i)ers seras estras</i>	<i>seies > soies</i>	<i>fusses</i>	<i>sereies > seroies estreies > estroies</i>	<i>seies > soies</i>
il	<i>est</i>	<i>fu(t)</i>	<i>(i)ere(t), (i)ert esteit > estoit</i>	<i>(i)ert sera(t) estrai(t)</i>	<i>seit > soit</i>	<i>fust</i>	<i>sereit > seroit estreit > estroit</i>	—
nos	<i>somes, esmes</i>	<i>fumes</i>	<i>erriens, erions estriens, estions</i>	<i>(i)ermes serons estrons</i>	<i>seiiens, seions > soiiens, soions</i>	<i>fussons/- iens</i>	<i>serriens, serions estriens, estriens</i>	<i>seiiens > soiiens, seions > soions</i>
vos	<i>estes</i>	<i>fustes</i>	<i>erriiez estriiez</i>	— <i>sere(i)z estre(i)z</i>	<i>seiiiez > soiiiez</i>	<i>fusseiz/- ez/-iez</i>	<i>serriiez estriiez</i>	<i>seiiiez > soiiiez</i>
ils	<i>sont</i>	<i>furent</i>	<i>(i)erent esteient > estoient</i>	<i>(i)erent seront estront</i>	<i>seient > soient</i>	<i>fussent</i>	<i>sereient > seroient estreient > estroient</i>	—

Non-finite forms:

- Infinitive: *estre*
- Present participle: *estant*
- Past participle: *esté(t)*

Auxiliary verb: *avoir*

Other parts of speech

Adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections are generally invariable, one notable exception being the adverb *tot*, like Modern French *tout*: all, every.

See also

- [Influence of French on English](#)
- [Bartsch's law](#)
- [Anglo-Norman literature](#)
- [History of French](#)
- [History of the English language](#)
- [Languages of France](#)

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